

Short
version

Culture strategy for Västra Götaland and the regional culture plan for 2020–2023

vgregion.se/kultur

Table of contents

Introduction.....	3
Short version of the Culture strategy for Västra Götaland – and the regional culture plan for 2020–2023	4
Brief information about Västra Götaland	5
Definitions	6
The infrastructure of culture.....	7
Regional culture strategy for Västra Götaland.....	8
Megatrends affect conditions for culture	9
Five guiding perspectives.....	10
Five strategic areas	11
Regional Culture Plan for Västra Götaland 2020–2023.....	14

Introduction



Short version of the Culture strategy for Västra Götaland – and the regional culture plan for 2020–2023

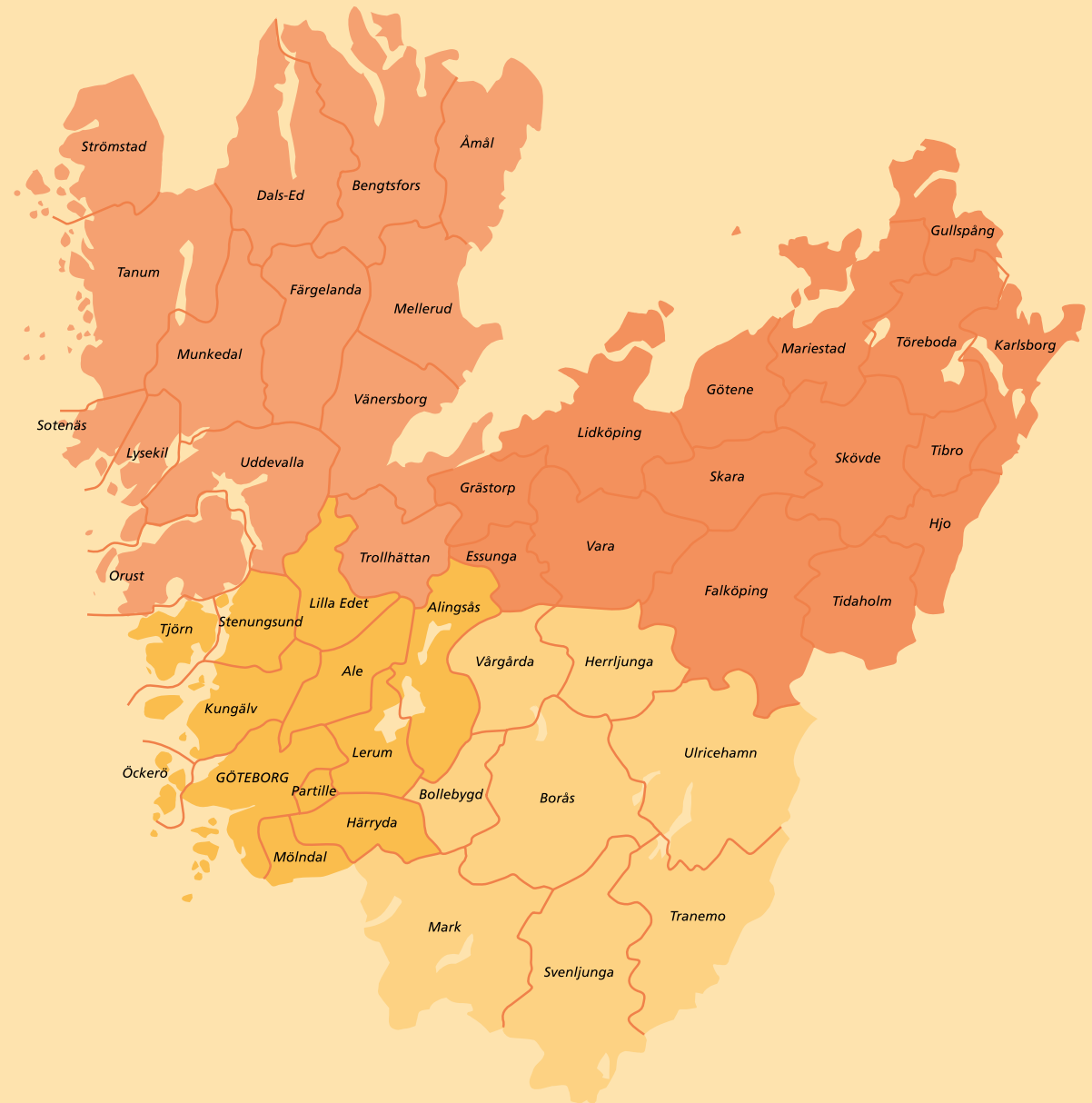
Regional initiatives for culture during the period 2020–2023 are governed by the Regional Council's culture strategy and annual budget.

The Culture Strategy involves municipalities and other stakeholders in Västra Götaland and is closely tied to local cultural policy documents. It provides guidelines for organizations who develop and make possible different cultural events and experiences.

Brief information about Västra Götaland

- The population of Västra Götaland is 1,714,000 or 16.7 % of the total population of Sweden
- Västra Götaland consists of 49 local authorities and four municipal associations: Borås Region Sjuhärad's Municipal Association, Fyrbodal Municipal Association, Gothenburg Region's Municipal Association, Skaraborg's Municipal Association
- The region and the municipalities together spend around SEK 3.1 billion on arts and culture in Västra Götaland each year
- Region Västra Götaland spends on average SEK 685 per inhabitant on arts and culture
- The municipalities in Västra Götaland spend on average SEK 1,115 per inhabitant on arts and culture

Source: Statistics Sweden 2019 and 2017, and Public expenditure on culture 2017, Agency for cultural analysis



Definitions

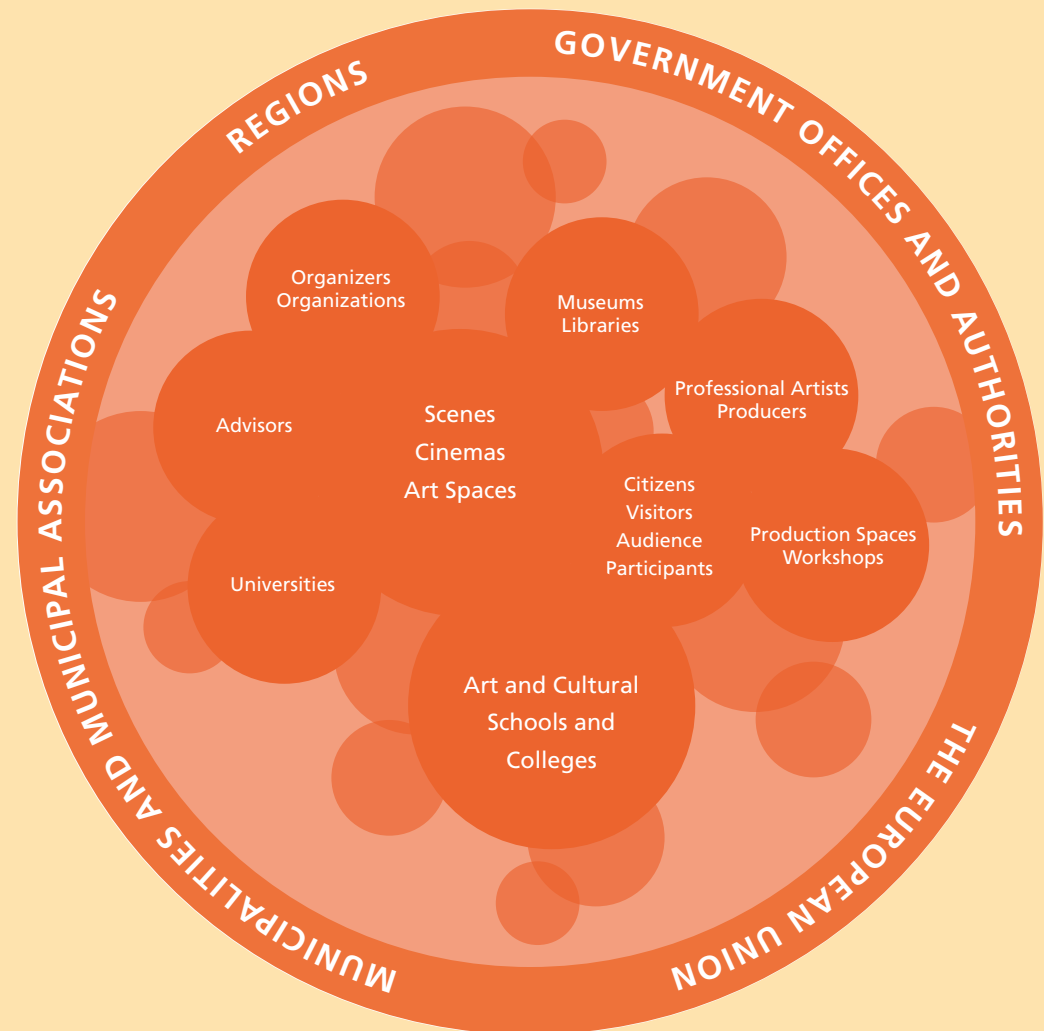
Artist: Professional practitioners and creators in all areas of art.

Independent culture: Organizations and individual practitioners who work with arts and culture in a professional capacity but outside of institutions of art and culture institutions.

Non-profit culture: People and organizations that are active in arts and culture on a non-profit (unpaid) basis due to their interests.

The infrastructure of culture

There is a coherent network of cultural activities in Västra Götaland thanks to a well-developed and organised infrastructure for culture. One of the tasks of the Swedish Arts Council is to contribute to infrastructure for culture, in cooperation with organizations, municipalities, municipal associations, the government and the EU. This structure is not static; it is based on change and interaction with organizations, institutions and artists within different locations, skills and size, as well as various specialities, niches and methods. Diversity has an intrinsic value. There is a natural dialogue within the infrastructure on how cultural assets are distributed and what areas need more support.



Regional culture strategy for Västra Götaland





The purpose of the culture strategy is to create a shared basis for cultural politics in Västra Götaland. It describes the megatrends that affect the development of culture, leading viewpoints and strategic areas that provide guidelines for the implementation of the cultural policy.

› Megatrends affect conditions for culture

Global megatrends affect all sections of society, but they are difficult to influence. They both limit and create opportunities for Region Västra Götaland.

The digitalized world

Technological development has revolutionized the ways in which people communicate with each other and how society functions financially, socially, and not least, culturally. This development has led to greater power and potential for action on the part of each individual in society. The distance between authorities and individuals has decreased, for example, and people are able to organize themselves on different issues independently of their location in the world. There are of course downsides, such as digital exclusion that can lead to isolation from others in society. There is still a need for physical meetings between people, even in a digitized world.

Climate change

Climate change requires global collaboration on an unprecedented scale. Art and culture can contribute by encouraging public debate and promoting climate-conscious choices at the individual level. This could include the reuse of products and climate friendly design, as well as reducing travel by experiencing cultural events digitally. There is space for many different perspectives in the world of art.

Widening gaps in society

Västra Götaland faces a number of challenges, now and in the near future. The population is growing but the group of people of working age is shrinking, which creates problems in skills supply and tax revenues. Differences between city centres and suburbs are likely to increase as a result of more focus on attractive cities. Loneliness among mainly elderly people creates a new demand for meeting places. Breaking down barriers and creating cultural forums may be part of the solution, using culture as a force for social cohesion and art as a means of encouraging new perspectives. The pressure on multi-sector cooperation will increase.

› Five guiding perspectives

There are five guiding perspectives for Region Västra Götaland's cultural policy. These five perspectives will help to include the inhabitants of Västra Götaland in a cultural life that both concerns them and moves them.

The future of Region Västra Götaland lies in:

- **Open democracy**

helping to create the conditions for everyone to participate in cultural life, as spectators, participants or creators. The perspective of open democracy is based on the national cultural policy goal, that everyone has the right to participate in cultural life, and the UN Convention on Human Rights.

- **Artistic quality**

to emphasize the viewpoint that quality is a changeable and sometimes questioned, but necessary, goal of cultural policy. Cultural policy in itself cannot guarantee artistic quality, but it can create better or worse conditions for innovation and creativity.

- **Social relevance**

to help create environments and organizations that are perceived as meaningful and stimulating by those who live and work in them. Social relevance can only be created through the involvement of the people concerned. Region Västra Götaland works toward a cultural climate based on social equality, sustainability, gender equality and diversity, which safeguards the intrinsic value of

art as well as the benefits of art and cultural expression for the development of society.

- **Economic potential**

to collaborate with other policy areas while being aware that the economic importance of culture not only lies in normal business activities. Culture affects a society's and a region's potential for development, both through independent culture and through institutions and associations.

- **Regional profile**

to contribute to the reinforcement of Region Västra Götaland as a cultural region and in particular to highlight the importance of participation and quality. Culturally interesting places attract business and tourism, which benefits the general development in the area.

› Five strategic areas

Five strategic areas are of particular importance for the guiding perspectives to be realized. These are linked with global megatrends and the regional development mission of Region Västra Götaland.

Widen participation

Arts and culture ought to reach and involve inhabitants. From the perspective of human rights, Region Västra Götaland will work for a cultural climate that is based on social equality, gender equality and intercultural dialogue. Cultural investments are a part of democratic and educational work. Region Västra Götaland should work as an active force against the barriers which prevent or hinder people from participating in cultural life, such as discrimination and geographical distance. Include special measures to involve children and young people. Look at children's and young people's involvement in culture from a lifelong learning/creativity perspective. Examine the role of voluntary culture in interaction with professional culture to provide a more inclusive cultural scene. Intercultural dialogue is a tool to counteract unequal participation. It is based on an egalitarian dialogue between different social groups to create understanding and solve shared social challenges.

- **Focus 2020–2023:
Increase participation in cultural events and strengthen children's rights**

People get involved in culture for different reasons, in different circumstances and through varied interests. Factors such as gender,

ethnicity, age, income, education, residence and disabilities all affect their level of participation. Change is too slow, both in terms of individual creativity and the potential to influence publicly funded culture. Cultural organizations need tools and methods to achieve equal and wider participation. The purpose of increasing participation is to promote involvement, empowerment and creating a shared democratic culture where everybody has the same chance of participating. In order to achieve these aims, both the commissioning body and the practitioner must consider factors that may affect people's participation in the cultural scene. The UN Convention on the rights of the child became part of Swedish law on 1 January 2020. Among other things it states that children must be given the opportunity to influence and participate, according to their abilities, in all matters concerning them and shall be provided with space for their own creativity. During this strategy period, a vigorous effort must be made for the cultural rights of the child in processes of commission, follow-up and the spread of information as well as organizations being clearly reconnected at the political level. Organizations that make decisions and apply measures affecting children must always carry out child impact analyses and consider the best interests of the child.

Promoting innovation

Art and culture must be allowed to innovate and renew themselves. This includes not only artistic content, but also research, methodology, technological and organizational development. Region Västra Götaland will provide the conditions for creative activities, relevant research and innovative methods, ensure that

the relationship between cultural institutions and independent culture is reflected in productive and creative collaboration, stimulate cultural expression that challenges today's society and its cultural scene, and be prepared for genres and means of expression that we do not yet know of.

- **Focus 2020–2023: Improve conditions for artists and recognize the force of independent artists**

Large institutions in Västra Götaland provide hundreds of artists with an income every year. The report on artistic policy entitled *Konstnär – oavsett villkor?* from 2018 describes a number of weak points in Swedish cultural policy and how it handles artists' conditions, both at the national as well as regional and municipal levels. Artists' pay has stagnated, and they are rarely part of the social security system. The strategic area of promoting innovation ties in well with art policies that highlight artistic freedom, intrinsic value, quality and the arm's length principle. The goal of widening the responsibility for artists' conditions of work to more policy areas is particularly relevant in this respect. Region Västra Götaland will continue to safeguard freedom of expression through strategic work on the issue of threats and hatred toward artists. Voluntary cultural workers give more creative power, cohesion and positive social effects to towns and cities and their partnerships with professional culture create more jobs. To increase participation and promote innovation, it is important to support and advertise voluntary cultural work. During this strategy period, special attention will be given to available premises, schemes for voluntary adult culture workers and partnerships

between voluntary culture, professional culture and actors in the public sector. The various administrative levels must work together to achieve these goals.

Developing skills

The regional level is good for inspiring interaction and finding solutions between sectors. Region Västra Götaland will gather and coordinate skills within the region's culture workers. It will inspire and support cooperation between municipalities, organizations and participants. Develop cultural life through financial support, knowledge sharing and networking. Support methodological development in urban planning which, on the basis of local needs and resources, can strengthen the potential for culture.

- **Focus 2020–2023: Cooperation across policy areas**

In order to achieve the ambitious objectives of cultural participation and sustainability, different policy areas must cooperate since that is a prerequisite for cultural policy to be implemented on a regional and overall perspective. There is a need to build up shared knowledge at the regional, national and international level that includes public organizations, commerce, independent culture workers and civil society.

Draw benefits from technology

Digitalization moves across traditional boundaries between those who create and those who enjoy culture. Region Västra Götaland will make the most of revolutionary opportunities provided by digitalization regarding creation, mediation and participation in

arts and culture, develop digital skills and drive development, particularly in areas where the world around us requires new knowledge and skills.

- **Focus 2020–2023: Strengthen digital competence**

Promoting broad participation and production of culture at the same time as supporting innovation, creativity and artistic excellence are the foundations of the regional cultural policy. Digital competence needs to be built up in all artistic and cultural areas. Digitalization is a tool for artistic development, accessibility and participation, both for voluntary and professional cultural activities. Digitalization should be a means and not an end at the centre of cultural policies in this area. Changes related to digitalization and copyright challenge the conditions for professional culture workers and mean that people with disabilities can participate more in cultural life.

Increased internationalization

People with different backgrounds and experiences being involved in cultural work develops and enriches culture. Region Västra Götaland will broaden and deepen cultural exchange and will be involved in measures to combat racism and strive for intercultural dialogue. This applies to individual artists and festival activities, but also to the exchange of knowledge and training in collaboration with international partners that are carried out with the least possible climate impact. Promote an open and innovative cultural scene through international networks and organizations and increase European funding through such organizations. By

means of intercultural projects, draw attention to the fact that Västra Götaland includes the whole world and is enriched and developed in doing so.

- **Focus 2020–2023: Take advantage of existing contacts and knowledge**

To respond to the need of artists and cultural workers for internationalisation; to strengthen existing international contacts; to make better use of international networks and to advocate for the regional agenda through culture.

Regional Culture Plan for Västra Götaland 2020–2023





The Culture Plan describes the priorities of Region Västra Götaland for achieving the national culture policy goals. It is a tool for dialogue and cooperation with the authorities, municipalities and municipal associations as well as players in the area of arts and culture to be developed. It also serves as the basis for Region Västra Götaland's negotiations for government funding through the cultural collaboration model.

The following areas are included in the Culture Plan:

- Performing arts (music, theatre, dance, contemporary circus)
- Designed living environments
- Visual arts
- Crafts and handicraft
- Natural and cultural heritage and the cultural environment
- Archives
- Film and digital narratives
- Literature and the promotion of reading
- Libraries
- Media and media and information literacy
- Adult education
- Art and cultural schools and colleges
- National minorities and users of sign language
- Cities of refuge
- Cultural and creative industries and community development
- Internationalization
- Culture and health
- Sports

During 2020–2023, the culture plan will involve changes related to the identified priorities in each area of culture. These priorities are described in detail in the full version of the Culture strategy for Västra Götaland – and regional culture plan 2020–2023. The priorities are the basis for the culture board's commission and decisions during the period. Changes and priorities are intended to relate to focus areas as described under each strategy area; refer to the heading "Five Strategic Areas" on page 11.

Västra Götalandsregionen 2019
Koncernkontoret, koncernavdelning kultur

Contact Region Västra Götaland: kultur@vgregion.se

The full version of Culture strategy for Västra Götaland –
and regional cultural plan 2020–2023 can be found on our
website: www.vgregion.se/kultur

